

QUEER OLD NATURE.
"Why is it," asked a wondering child (Sweet, simple little thing),
That the foolish two puts on its clothes
When the sun shines in the spring,
And then, when chilly autumn comes
And the winds of winter blow,
Why does it stand out in all its bare,
In the frost and snow and snow?
"The nature has arranged it thus,"
I told the little one.
"The rustling leaves can only live
Beneath a smiling sun,
The tree that in the summer time
Makes shady bowers for you
Must have its rest, therefore it stands
Asleep the winter through."
She sat in silence for awhile
And gazed far into space,
And lines of thought and trouble came
To mar her childish face,
And so, at last, she turned and said:
"I'm sorry for the summer time,
And glad that nature wasn't left
To do things up for me!"
—S. E. Kiser in Cleveland Leader.

NOBODY KNEWED THE PAPER.
A Rebuke by General Washington That
Evidently Frightened the Owner.
Major William Pierce left behind him
a partial record of the debates in
Philadelphia which supplement those
of Madison, Yates and King; also the
following anecdote:
When the convention first opened at
Philadelphia, there was a number of
propositions brought forward as great
leading principles for the new govern-
ment to be established for the United
States. A copy of these propositions was
given to each member, with an injunction
to keep everything of a profound secret.
By accident, however, one of the
members dropped his copy of the
propositions, which, being luckily picked
up by General Mifflin, was presented
to General Washington, our president,
who put it in his pocket. After the de-
bates of the day were over and the ques-
tion for adjournment was called for the
general arose from his seat, and, address-
ing to his putting the question, address-
ed the convention in the following man-
ner:
"Gentlemen, I am sorry to find that
some one member of this body has been
so neglectful of the secrets of the con-
vention as to drop in the streethouse a
copy of their proceedings, which by ac-
cident was picked up and delivered to
me this morning. I must entreat gen-
tlemen to be more careful, lest our
transactions get into the newspapers and
disturb the public repose by premature
speculations. I know not whose paper it
is, but there it is (throwing it down
on the table). Let him who owned it take
it." At the same time he bowed, picked
up his hat and quitted the room with a
dignity so severe that every person
seemed alarmed. For my part, I was
extremely so, for, putting my hand in
my pocket, I missed my copy of the
same paper, but, advancing up I found
it to be the handwriting of another per-
son. When I went to my lodgings at
No. 1 Indian Queen, I found my copy in a
coat pocket which I had pulled off that
morning. It is something remarkable
that no person ever owned the paper.
—American Historical Review.

A MILD MANNERED PIRATE.
An Ex-Clerk Who Joined the Fierce Sea
Rovers of the Spanish Main.
"The Buccaneers of Our Coast" is the
title of a series of narrative sketches
that Frank R. Stockton is writing for
St. Nicholas. In speaking of John Es-
quemeling, who joined the buccaniers
and became their historian, Mr. Stock-
ton says:
It must have been a strange thing for
a man accustomed to pens and ink, to
himself and scales, to enroll the names
of his pirate companions. He looked
upon the buccaniers who had distin-
guished themselves as great heroes, and
it must have been extremely gratifying
to those savage fellows to tell Esquemeling
all the wonderful things they
had done. Esquemeling might have
earned a salary as a listener.
It was not long before his intense ad-
miration of the buccaniers and their per-
formances began to produce in him the
feeling that these great exploits should
not be lost to the world, and so he set
about writing their lives and adventures.
He remained with the pirates for sev-
eral years and during that time worked
very industriously getting together ma-
terial for his history. When he returned
to his own country in 1672, he there
completed a book which he called "The
Buccaniers of America; or, The True
Account of the Most Remarkable As-
saults Committed of Late Years Upon
the Coasts of the West Indian Islands
by the Buccaneers, etc." By John Esquemeling,
One of the Buccaneers, Who Was Present
at Those Tragedies."
From this title it is probable that in
the capacity of reporter our literary pi-
rate accompanied his comrades on their
various voyages and assaults, and al-
though he was present at many of
"those tragedies" he makes no reference
to any deeds of valor or cruelty per-
formed by himself, which shows him to
have been a wonderfully conscientious
historian. There are persons, how-
ever, who doubt his impartiality, be-
cause, as he liked the French, he al-
ways gave the pirates of that nationality
the credit for most of the bravery dis-
played on their expeditions, and all of
the magnanimity and courtesy, if there
happened to be any, while the selfishness,
brutality and extraordinary wickedness
were all ascribed to the English.
Appetite of the Florida Alligator.
The Florida alligator has an appetite
that is hard to appease. A fisherman,
weary with ill luck, pulled off his boots,
stretched himself on the river's green
bank and went to sleep. A saurian in
search of a dinner slipped the sleeping
fisherman, crawled up the bank, swal-
lowed him and retired in good order.
But after a time he remembered that
the late fisherman's boots were also re-
posing on the bank. A dinner without
boots was no dinner at all, so he re-
turned to taper off on the boots. And
while he was in the act of swallowing
them another fisherman, recently ar-
rived, shot him dead. Probably the
moral in this story is, "Some alligators
never know when they have enough."
—Atlanta Constitution.

THE PURSER'S NERVE.
SHAVED TO KEEP HIS WITS WHILE
THE SHIP WAS SINKING.
He Told the Story to the Galia's Ship-
wrecked Passengers—In the Matter of
Nerve He Went the Amateur Photo-
grapher One Better.
It was a cozy room, with antique
hangings and furniture and walls hung
with handsome works of art which
could be only indistinctly seen by the
light of the flickering fire on the hearth.
The little party agreed with the beau-
tiful hostess that the room was just
dark enough for a ghost story. "I don't
know a ghost story," said one of the
men, "but the dramatic rescue of the
Vendemia's passengers by the St. Louis
reminds me of my experience on board
the old Galia when she was caught in a
hurricane in midwinter about 700
miles from Queenstown. The waves
broke in our decks and flooded the cab-
bin, and nobody thought for a little
while that any one on board the vessel
would ever see land again. There was
no panic, no shouting, no weeping, and
it seemed that all were perfectly pre-
pared to go, though they looked far from
happy floundering about in the water
dressed in such garments as they could
grasp when they were aroused from their
sleep by the rushing of the sea into the
cabin. At 7 o'clock in the morning, the
stewards had begun to set the table for
breakfast, and, as I recall the picture, I
can see men and women, most of them
with heavy wraps over their night-
dresses, standing on the table and dan-
cing a forced minuet between the guard
rails and the dishes.
"At one end of the cabin, while others
were silently praying, stood a young fel-
low with nothing on but a suit of blue
and white pyjamas, holding a snap
camera in front of him. 'If you folks'll
hold still a minute,' he said, 'we'll
have a picture of this if we ever get out
of it.' And for a moment people forgot
the terrible situation, and I have always
believed that one of the women adjusted
her water soaked gown so that she
might look well in the picture taken
under the shadow of the destroying angel.
"Well, we got through it all right,
although we came to Liverpool in a sad-
ly battered condition, and when they
hoisted the trunks from the hold the
water ran out of them as though each
piece was a sieve. We had service on
board the ship the Sunday following our
disaster, and, although two days had
passed since we thought we were
gone, we seemed only then to appreciate
fully what had happened to us. Men and
women who had shown no sign of fear un-
der the most appalling circumstances, were
unable to speak because of the lump in
their throats, and the service of soup
was a flat failure, because no one could
sing any more than the young woman
at the organ could get a note out of that
water soaked, dripping piece of furni-
ture.
"We reached Liverpool too late at
night to leave the ship, and the men,
who had become better acquainted than
they would have been in a less dan-
gerous voyage, gathered in the saloon
and for the hundredth time exchanged
congratulations.
"This was nothing," said our purser,
"to the experience I once had, and not
so long ago. To go down with all hands
must be hard enough, but to be the only
one of a whole shipful to go and to see
all the rest saved—that's pretty hard.
That came near being my case, and I
don't want another similar experience.
"I was an officer on the Ohio when
she knocked a hole in her bottom, and
I helped transfer the passengers and
save what we could. When all had been
sent to the ship which came to our re-
lief, we made ready for the last boat-
load, of which I was to be one. We
had a lot of money and valuables in the
ship's safe, and I went below, took a
tablecloth from the cabin table, and
various valuables of the safe. I
made a bag of it, carried it on deck,
and when came to where the boat
should have been I found that it had
gone, and I, with the treasure, was left
in the rapidly sinking ship. I can think
of any number of situations which I
would have preferred to mine just then.
The wind being against me, I could not
make myself heard. I put up signals,
and no one would ever guess what I did
then. I wanted to keep my wits about
me and block all chances for nervous-
ness, so I did what requires a man's
full attention—began to shave, and I
don't doubt whether I ever did a cleaner or
a better job.
"By the time I had finished my
companions must have missed me, for I
could see them returning, and when they
came alongside there were not many
inches to step down from the sinking
boat to the little thing that took us
away. I tell you this story to show
how necessary it is to have nerve
on board ship."
"And did he tell it for a true story?"
asked the hostess.
"He swore to every detail."
"Then he did have nerve."—New
York Tribune.

"By Hook or Crook."
In old times the poor of a manor were
permitted to obtain fuel for the dead
wood from the surrounding woodland.
The dead twigs and branches which
were beyond their reach they were al-
lowed to lop off with a hook or a crook.
There is a document among the re-
cords of the town of Bodmin which gives
the right to the burghers of the town,
under the concession of the prior of
Bodmin, "to bear and carry away on
their backs and in no other way the lop,
crop, hoop, crook and bag wood in the
prior's wood of Dunmere."
Another part of this paper mentions
this as "a right with hook and crook to
lop, crop and carry away fuel, etc., in
the same wood."
The date of this record is 1525.—New
York World.

What He Thought.
"I know," said the candidate for the
small office to the veteran, "that you
wouldn't sell your vote." "No, son, I
wouldn't." "That can't be bribed?"
"Now you talkin', son!" "But suppose
I should make you a present of \$10?
What would you think?" The voter
looked thoughtful, then said, "Well,
Marse Jim, jedge by yo' pas' record,
I'd either think yo'd done los' yo' min',
or else yo'd in de counterfeiter busi-
ness!"—Atlanta Constitution.

Quite Too Much.
Impassioned Lover—Tell me, my an-
gel, what to do to prove my love. Oh,
that I might, like some knight of old,
battle for you, suffer for you, die for
you!
Sweet Girl—I wish you would give
up smoking.
Impassioned Lover—Oh, come, now,
that's asking too much!—New York
Weekly.

Children under 7 years of age are dis-
covered almost invariably to prefer yel-
low before all other colors.

CURLING IN AMERICA.
A Scotch Game Zealously Cultivated by
Scotchmen.
The game of curling has secured a
firm place among the winter sports in
all parts of the country where there is
heavy ice and where there are Scotch-
men to teach the game to their Ameri-
can neighbors. There are about 50 curl-
ing clubs in the United States, and the
Grand National Curling Club of Amer-
ica has a membership of many hundreds
in all parts of the north and northwest,
but still the game is spoken of as "Scot-
land's ain game."
The game is always played on ice
covered lakes or rivers, except in Eng-
land, where it is frequently played on
glass roofs by men whose white
waistcoats, straw hats, floral decora-
tions and general lack of Scotch style
cause the real curlers to regard them
with scorn.
The curlers who are members of the
New York clubs have their contests on
Van Cortlandt lake, and there is proba-
bly no class of sportsmen who go about
a game so seriously as they.
The object of the game is to plant the
curling stone, which has a teakettle
shape and weighs from 32 to 44 pounds,
near the "tee," or center of a circle at a
distance of 40 yards, and to guard it
there.
Next to the stone the broom plays the
most important part in the game of
curling, because in the hands of a
sweeper who is anxious to see the stone
advance to the circle, whereas it will
count if he does it dexterously, so that
every particle of snow or ice may be
removed from the stone's course. On sud-
denly receiving the tip that it was time
to move, he immediately laid his broom
to the stone, and, with a few strokes,
he had brought it to the circle. The
work was done so expertly that the
contractors for repair. This hit
cost the firm \$600 and was found to
be a well known firm delivered a torpedo
destroyer to the naval authorities. She
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